

## HAMILTON'S STREETCAR ERA...

On May 21, 1874 the city entered the "modern era" when the first Hamilton Street Railway horse-drawn streetcar took to city roads. The cars ran on rails, but were pulled by one or two horses. The earliest vehicles seated 14 passengers.



Beginning in 1892, electricity was used to power the vehicles. This new technology made the service much faster. Cars now zoomed along at a furious 15mph! Some of the streetcars had closed-in sides, but others were open-sided, making them popular for summertime outings.

Up until 1899, the HSR was owned by individual shareholders. With the coming of electrification, the interests of power companies expanded considerably. Hamilton Cataract Power, Dominion Power &

Transmission, and later the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario, were successive owners of the HSR until after World War II.

During these years the city expanded and so did the need for public transit. From the days of the Great Depression in the 1930s through the mid-1940s and World War II, equipment was pushed to the maximum.

A group, which included Francis Farwell, owner of Canada Coach Lines, assumed ownership of the HSR in 1946. Within a few months it was announced that streetcars would be phased out in five years.



On April 6, 1951, thousands of onlookers jammed Gore Park to witness ceremonies when the old streetcar made its symbolic final run. Streetcar tracks were ripped up in a massive road works project that lasted for years.

## BRING ON THE BUSES!

Actually, buses had been around for quite awhile. By the mid-1920s it had become apparent that motor buses would be more efficient than streetcars on some routes. By August of 1926, buses were running on the Balmoral/Main route, with Cannon following the next year.



While they represented the height of efficiency, these early buses were strange looking!

In 1960, the City of Hamilton purchased the HSR and CCL from Farwell, and the Hamilton Transit Commission was established to operate the organization. Seventeen years later the company came under the jurisdiction of the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

Since that time, technical and service improvements that better meet the needs of an expanding region have been adopted.

## SERVICE FOR A NEW CENTURY

The Hamilton Street Railway constantly moves forward with improved services and more environmentally conscious vehicles.



Since 1986, the Beeline express service has whisked rush hour passengers from McMaster University to Eastgate Square. In 1987, BusCheck was launched. Call the telephone number on your bus stop and learn when the next two scheduled buses will pass that location.

### INFO CORNER

Urban transit area (UTA)	250km <sup>2</sup>
UTA population	412,000
Typical weekday ridership	65,000
Typical Saturday ridership	37,000
Typical Sunday Ridership	19,000



Owned and Operated by the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth



## INFO CORNER

Number of:	
Bus stops	2,115
Bus shelters	460
BusCheck calls, 1998	3,918,828
BusCheck telephone numbers	1,225
Information calls, 1998	170,000
Total number of routes	29
Longest route	Route 5 Delaware (44.42 kms)
Shortest route	Route 8 York (5.79 kms)

Environmentally friendly fuels are the way of the future. Since the late 1980s, when 10 diesel buses were converted to natural gas, the HSR has steadily increased its fleet of alternate-fuel vehicles.



The Nature Bus was launched in 1993 and beautifully illustrates the company's commitment to the environment.



Information  
527-4441

Another goal of the HSR is to provide service to all members of the public. Since 1996, Accessible Low Floor, or "ALF", buses have made public transit available to people using wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility aids.



## THE FLEET

GM Canada - 40' diesel	44
GM Canada - 60' articulated diesel	6
GM Canada - natural gas (converted)	1
MCI Canada - 40' diesel	29
Orion - 40' diesel	15
Orion - 40' CNG	30
Nova - 40' low floor diesel	20
Flyer - 40' low floor CNG	35
Average years a bus is in service	18.3
Average age of a bus in the fleet	8

Note: Statistics reflect a ten-month period in 1998.



Administration & Customer Services  
528-4200

## INFO CORNER

Total kilometers traveled, 1998	10,243,175
Total vehicle service hours, 1998	544,677



In these times of scarce public funding, service by full-size buses is not always feasible. This is the philosophy behind Stoney Creek

Trans-Cab, launched in 1998, and Trans-Link, the new service in Dundas.



Small vehicles, operating in less-traveled areas, transfer passengers to regular-service, full-size buses.

The Hamilton Street Railway is moving boldly into the new century. And the company affectionately remembers the exciting 125 years since its first horse-drawn vehicle rattled along King Street in 1874.



The Hamilton Street Railway Company  
Website: [www.hsr.hamilton-went.on.ca](http://www.hsr.hamilton-went.on.ca)

URBAN  
MUNICIPAL

1874 HSR 1999

CAB ON HWY 60  
99H72



CELEBRATING  
125 YEARS  
OF SERVICE